

Period. Dr

EQUAL RIGHTS

"MEN AND WOMEN SHALL HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS THROUGHOUT THE
UNITED STATES AND EVERY PLACE SUBJECT TO ITS JURISDICTION"

Amendment to the United States Constitution now before Congress



—Photo by Harris Ewing.

The flares shown above before the entrance of Alva Belmont House were lighted January 3, when the Equal Rights Amendment was introduced in the Seventy-sixth Congress. The flame which burns when Congress is in session is a constant reminder of the flaming spirit of American women demanding a full share in Democracy.

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Equal Rights



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NATIONAL WOMAN'S PARTY

OBJECT

To secure for women complete equality with men under the law and in all human relationships—in particular to secure the adoption of the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution, and the adherence of the United States to the Equal Rights Treaty. The Woman's Party also supports the proposed Equality Amendments to the Covenant of the League of Nations.

THE PROPOSED EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

"Art. 1—Men and women shall have Equal Rights throughout the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction.
"Art. 2—Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation."

Introduced

Senate—By Senator John G. Townsend, (Del.), and Senator Edward R. Burke, (Neb.), Jan. 4, 1939, (Senate Joint Resolution No. 7).

House—By Representative Louis Ludlow, (Ind.), Jan. 3, 1939, (House Joint Resolution No. 2).
By Representative U. S. Guyer, (Kans.), Jan. 3, 1939, (House Joint Resolution No. 27).
By Representative Ambrose J. Kennedy, (Md.), Jan. 3, 1939, (House Joint Resolution No. 25).

Present Status

Senate—Before Judiciary Sub-Committee.

House—Before Judiciary Committee.

Favorable action by Sub-Committee April 26, 1939.

THE EQUAL RIGHTS TREATY

"Art. 1—The contracting States agree that upon the ratification of this Treaty men and women shall have Equal Rights throughout the territory subject to their respective jurisdictions."

Signed

By Cuba, Ecuador, Paraguay, and Uruguay, at Montevideo, December, 1933.

PROPOSED EQUALITY AMENDMENTS TO COVENANT OF LEAGUE OF NATIONS

"The members of the League undertake that in their respective countries the right of vote shall not be denied or abridged on the ground of sex."

"The members of the League undertake that in their respective countries there shall be no distinction based on sex in their law and practice regarding nationality."

"The members of the League undertake that in their respective countries men and women shall have equal rights in all other fields."

"The members of the League undertake that there shall be both men and women, with full voting powers, in all delegations to the Council and Assembly of the League and to all Conferences under the auspices of the League."

Present Status

Before the League of Nations Committee on Status of Women.

Ever Hear Of Runnymede?

ON EXHIBITION at the World's Fair in New York City is one of the four copies still extant, of the Magna Charta, that great document which is called the "foundation of all our liberties."

Signed in 1215 by "John, by the Grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine," the Magna Charta remains the cornerstone of male democracy.

The *New York Times* in an editorial relative to the fact that "this precious parchment" is for the first time in history on display in this country, says, "It is as much our heritage as Britain's and it is fitting that it should have been transported to the Fair by an American guard of honor. No world of tomorrow in which we would care to live could exist except beneath the sheltering foliage rooted in this ancient bill of rights."

The *Times*, referring to the signing of the document, which is the central treasure of the British Pavilion at the Fair, says, "The long list of royal ras-calities they required him (John) to renounce included this famous clause: 'To no one will we sell, to no one will we refuse or delay right or justice.' From that day forward," says the *Times*, "the principle of equal justice has inspired the Anglo-Saxon world wherever it extended on the earth. Again and again it was denied, but never for long, and when it was, kings and governments fell. Charles I lost his head and George III his colonies because of Magna Charta."

The principle of freedom and equal rights established in the Great Charter were applied only to men and it has taken women centuries to secure a little a time the rights which men considered so precious and are so tardily understanding are equally precious to women.

With the Magna Charta now on American soil, is it not possible that its very presence in this land will suggest to the United States the fact that there is a missing link in our Democracy until it is all embracing, granting equal rights to all citizens—women and men alike?

"To no one will we sell, to no one will we refuse or delay right or justice" has, since 1215 been considered the guarantee of this equality of rights to men, but not to women. Since the words "no one" are susceptible of only one meaning unless distorted, is it not stupid to construe the phrase in the light of the worst we find in tradition? The world has moved forward on principles of freedom. Civilization has advanced as liberties have been made secure.

Magna Charta is the foundation of the liberties of men—not women. Must women who prize liberty and freedom now demand another Magna Charta from those who in this day and generation stand as another King John opposing equal justice?

The foundation of the liberties of all men was laid by the few who gathered at Runnymede and wrested from King John the Great Charter.

The Equal Rights Amendment, a Magna Charta for women, originally sponsored by a few, but now by many, will be the foundation of the liberties of American women. This guarantee of democracy in the Magna Charta of our nation will secure for half the citizens of the United States the rights other citizens already enjoy. The cause of the Britons was no more just.

More than 700 years after the signing of Magna Charta, women, whose liberties it did not guarantee, like the barons of old, are gathering at another Runnymede!

Equal Rights Amendment Support Strengthened

BUSINESS and professional women of the nation, represented by the National Federation of Business and Professional

Women's Clubs in biennial convention in Kansas City, Mo., July 9-14, stood firm in their demand for equal rights under law and in the economic field. Reaffirming their position taken two years ago in Atlantic City in regard to the proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the federal Constitution and in opposition to so-called protective laws for women, the Federation added to its support program "Legislation directed to the establishment of the following principle: The right to work for compensation being a property right, shall not be abridged or denied by reason of race, religion, sex, economic or marital status."

Recommended for the *Support Program* by the Round Table Group dealing with Public Affairs, the Convention adopted the following item: "A proposed amendment to the U. S. Constitution known as the Equal Rights Amendment."

The overwhelming sentiment exhibited two years ago at the close of the Atlantic City Convention when in a dramatic final session the Federation rejected the Woman's Charter with its restrictive provisions and approved the Equal Rights Amendment, which had been on its study program for two years, was equally strong at the Convention in Kansas City. Every reference to the question of equal rights under law and in the economic field was acted upon in a manner which left no doubt as to the determination of this great body to secure in the Constitution of the United States a guarantee that the law shall be equal in its application to men and women.

Representatives from twenty states reported on bills introduced in their legislatures proposing to restrict the right of married women to work. Olivia Johnson, a past president of the Minnesota Federation and a Regional Director, exhibited a folder being circulated by a concern proposing to "Put Married Women Back in the Home." On Mrs. Johnson's motion the Convention included in its suggestions for State Study Programs, "Methods of mobilizing public opinion in our communities in order that the right of women, married and single, to equal opportunity in gainful occupation shall be safeguarded."

Dr. Minnie L. Maffett, of Dallas, Texas, was elected President, succeeding Earlene White, of Washington, D. C. Other officers elected included Helen Kidd Thompson, Greenville, Pa., first vice-president; Celia M. Howard, Chicago, Ill., second vice-president; Olivia Johnson, St. Paul, Minn., third vice-president; Maude E. Empey, San Jose, Calif., secretary; Isabelle Claridge, Wheeling, W. Va., treasurer.

The overwhelming sentiment of this splendid group of 70,000 business and professional women as expressed by its unanimous action in placing on its Support Program the Equal Rights Amendment, will play a tremendous part in securing passage of the Amendment when the Federation mobilizes for action in the campaign as it did several years ago to bring about the repeal of Section 213 of the Economy Act.

Lena Madesin Phillips, honorary President of the National Federation and President of the International Federation of Business and Professional Women, staunch supporter of the Amendment at the Convention two years ago, showed the same interest she has long shown in securing passage of the Amendment.

THREE NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS FIRM IN STAND—AAUW ENDORSES PRINCIPLE BUT OBJECTS TO METHOD

A feature of the Convention was an address by Margaret Culkin Banning, author, on "The Business Women of Today," who

saw for the woman who earns her own living the necessity for complete equality. Judge Florence Allen, distinguished jurist, spoke on "The Business Woman of Tomorrow." Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, Suffrage leader, closed a national broadcast to the Convention with, "The Woman Movement is not at an end. The brave and strong will go on."

From The Association of American Women Dentists in session Milwaukee, Wis., there came on July 18 the following telegram:

"Greetings from Association American Women Dentists in Convention assembled at Milwaukee to National Woman's Party celebrating Women's Independence Day. Congratulations upon inaugurating this celebration."

The Association of American Women Dentists is one of the seventeen national organizations campaigning for the Equal Rights Amendment.

Pilot International, a national organization of women executives with approximately ninety clubs scattered throughout the country, met in convention in St. Augustine, Florida, in June. The Pilots are supporters of the Equal Rights Amendment.

The American Association of University Women, for the first time in its history, took a definite stand in favor of equal rights for women at its national convention, held in Denver in June.

It voted to work for the removal of discrimination in government employment on the basis of marital status or sex, and while it voted opposition to the "Equal Rights Amendment" as a means of securing equality for women in this country, it did not vote to oppose the Federal Amendment method as a basis for work, nor did it endorse any form of protective legislation for women only.

In fact, the principle of equal rights was specifically adopted in the report of the committee on the Legal and Economic Status of Women, on which the Legislative committee's recommendation was based.

Commenting on the action of the convention on this subject, Dr. Florence Sabin, former Professor of Histology at Johns Hopkins Medical School and more recently Member of the Staff of Rockefeller Institute, a distinguished member of the AAUW, said: "I feel that it is a great pity that University women voted that they believed in the principle of equal rights but not in the only method of ensuring its application."

"Women have, as yet, achieved equality in but two fields—the stage and literature. In other fields their accomplishments are meagre in amount. This is mainly because the doors of opportunity are not fully opened to them."

"The question of equality before the law is not a question that concerns the ability of individuals—it is merely the guarantee of equality of right to achieve, regardless of sex. That equality belongs of right to all, whether the individual is an artist or a ditch digger."

"Until equality under the law is won for women, equality in custom will never be accorded them. The first step is to win equality under the law. The rest will follow, and women will then be in a position to compete in a fair field. But without that equality, women will always be at a disadvantage."

You Can't Do This To Women

By Byron McG. West

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Equal Rights* here presents the frank expression of the masculine viewpoint regarding driving married women out of jobs. Mr. West is a journalist—editor and publisher. A student of government, he believes there should be no difference between the sexes as citizens in a democracy.

AN ORGANIZATION, with headquarters in Chicago, has launched a campaign destined to be nationwide in scope to deny all married women the right to work for a living. It would not only drive married women out of jobs they now occupy, but would deny them the right to get jobs should those unfortunates find it necessary to work—lest they starve.

If this movement is not un-American and contrary to the Constitution, which guarantees certain rights and privileges to all American citizens—then we do not know our Constitution and all our thinking is haywire. Certainly here is a field for exploration by the Department of Justice and the Dies Congressional Committee on un-American activities.

It would be interesting to know from whence springs this sorry scheme, its promoters, source of its revenue and what becomes of the money after administration expenses—assuming that there are expenses for promotional work. Movements of this character can be sources of millions in revenue. Consider what other movements of similar character have yielded.

The ban on married women is called the Wage-Security Plan and its initial circular says, "The first guns to be fired in our campaign for jobs for men and single women only will be in Illinois, Missouri, Michigan, Ohio, Indiana and Minnesota."

So it is safe to assume that later—when it gets richer and bolder—the campaign will be extended.

Its unblushing slogan is, "Put the Married Women Back in the Home."

Its folder, printed in red, white and blue, outlines its plan as follows:

1—Jobs for men and single women only (extenuating circumstances excepted).

2—To seek municipal, state and federal legislation creating laws to this effect. (Lawmakers throughout the nation are now being canvassed.)

3—To maintain a lobby in Washington and the different state capitols to further our cause.

4—To seek the cooperation of industrialists, storekeepers and employers in general.

5—To endorse candidates for public office who pledge themselves to actively support legislation to accomplish the aims of the plan.

6—To seek support through speakers' bureaus and through advertising via radio, newspapers and periodicals.

That's the plan. It would have been more appropriate if the folder had been printed entirely in red. Red would be more in keeping with its un-American character. We were intrigued by the "generous" concessions contained in plank one of the platform, expressed as an after-thought, that married women probably would be permitted to work under certain "extenuating circumstances." But the "extenuating circumstances" were not listed, nor was it stated just who is going to pass upon these "extenuating circumstances."

If these things can be done to married women, they can be done to single women and to single men, or to

any other group of American citizens. And further it could be decreed that any one of these groups could have meat only three times a week, sugar twice a week.

Married women get just as hungry as any other human beings—male or female—married or single. That they must work for economic reasons is as pressing to them as it is to other groups. Few people work just for the sheer love of working. They labor because they must do so to survive. Countless married women have dependents to support as well as themselves and many of these dependents are husbands, who are either physically incapacitated, too lazy, or too incompetent to be bread winners. There are many hundreds of thousands of women in the United States supporting themselves and their children after worthless husbands have abandoned them.

Women represent a little more than fifty percent of the population of the United States. Probably ninety-nine out of every hundred single women have an idea that some day they may marry. And probably a large percentage of these women do not want a ban placed upon their right to work, should they so desire or should it become an economic necessity.

Movements such as this Wage-Security misnomer will eventually drive all women into a voting bloc and the way they will slaughter legislative candidates pledging themselves to vote for laws driving women out of jobs and putting them back in the home will be an interesting episode in American political history.

The thing is not honest. We quote a paragraph from the Wage-Security Plan folder: "Today thousands of married women are holding jobs that rightfully belong to the God-intended provider of the household." This is an appeal to the very lowest order of intelligence, because God hasn't anything to do with it and it is not so written in the Scriptures, or anywhere else where reason and sanity prevail.

"Like an octopus this situation is spreading, threatening the very existence of the home," is another bit of drivel dripping from this Wage-Security folder. And further, the statement that this condition (meaning married women in jobs) "threatens to destroy the economic structure of the nation," is vicious nonsense.

Similarly, there is not a word of truth in any of its statements concerning the so-called "disasters" which will overtake the country unless married women are driven out of jobs. And the same goes for the "beneficial" results which it says will accrue to the nation if all married women are put back in the home.

That this moronic twaddle strikes at the sanctity of marriage, which is the basis of the home and one of the slender threads holding civilization together, is an evil consequence which these self-appointed mischievous busybodies fail to stress. Now, if they want to talk about God-given matters, they would have something in the thought that marriage as an institution must be fostered and protected if we are to maintain a well ordered, decent society.

Such pernicious activity already has broken up many homes through divorce because married women, who had to work, could not afford marriage. It was not

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International Labor Conference

By Erica Butler-Bowdon

Chairman of the Committee on Work with the I. L. O.—World Woman's Party

THAT the world crisis did not affect the International Labour Conference was shown by the numerous delegations that gathered in Geneva from all parts of the world for its Twenty-fifth Session held last month. The Conference proved to be exceptionally interesting from our point of view, and although certain setbacks have to be recorded, yet it can safely be said that on the other hand definite progress was made.

A vigorous campaign was carried out by the World Woman's Party and the Equal Rights International under the inimitable leadership of Alice Paul, Chairman of the World Woman's Party, which has lately been established at the Villa Bartholoni, Geneva. An important feature of this campaign was the large deputation which was received by the President of the Conference, Mr. Schulthess (Switzerland) and the Director of the I. L. O., Mr. Winant. Held under the auspices of the World Woman's Party it was composed of women from 18 countries and was supported by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, the Equal Rights International, the Woman's Organisation for World Order and by four of the five organisations comprising the Women's Consultative Committee. The deputation, introduced by Alice Paul, urged the I. L. O. to incorporate in its constitution:

- 1 a provision that all conventions concluded under the I. L. O. be founded upon the principle of equal rights for men and women, and
- 2 a further provision requiring that there be both men and women, with equal voting rights, in all delegations to meetings and conferences held under the auspices of the I. L. O.

Speeches were made by the following: Erica Butler-Bowdon (England), Chairman of the Committee on Work with the I. L. O., World Woman's Party; Mlle. Lenoel (France), General Secretary of the Jeanne d'Arc Alliance of France; Miss L. C. A. Van Eeghen (Holland), representing the Equal Rights International; Mme. Lydie Kretchmar (Switzerland), representing the World Woman's Party in Switzerland; Miss Dorothy Evans (England), Hon. Secretary of the Women's Consultative Committee; Mme. Heléne Romniciano (Roumania), representing the Woman's Organisation for World Order; Mme. Eugénie Meller (Hungary), President of the Feminist Organisation of Hungary; Miss Leonore Cespedes (Colombia), and Miss Henrietta Hart (New York, U. S. A.), Chairman of International Relations of the Council of Women of the United States. Alice Paul then summed up the demands.

Mr. Schulthess and Mr. Winant thanked the deputation for their visit and assured them that their requests would be taken into consideration. Mr. Winant added that he was in sympathy with much the deputation had said, and expressed the view that because of the present economic and political situation the problems of the rights of women was a major issue in the world.

One of the aims of the campaign was to endeavor to have the recent publication of the I. L. O. on women's work, "Law and the Woman Worker," spoken about during the discussion of the Director's Report. As a result Mme. Julie Arenholt of Denmark made an excellent speech in which she showed that the I. L. O. report on Women's Work revealed that wage

earning women are in most countries regarded as a class apart, and that consequently they are forced into the lowest paid jobs. She urged the protection of all workers irrespective of sex and called upon the I. L. O. to solve the problem of raising the status of women workers by equal pay and equal working rights.

She was supported by Mr. Daly, Irish Workers' delegate, who made a special plea for the rights of the woman worker. "My congratulations," he said, "to the lady from Denmark who speaks from all our hearts. Let us go back and take what she said to heart, for I know people who talk about wages and workers' conditions and set a very bad example when it comes to paying women for doing men's work."

Two resolutions on women's work and the recent I. L. O. Report "Law and the Woman Worker" had been sent in to the Conference. One was by Mr. Kupers, Workers' delegate from Holland, asking for a further study by the Governing Body of that part of the report relating to women's wages. The other by Mr. Jouhaux, workers' delegate, France, although it upheld special protection for women, yet regarded it only as a first step and urged that legislation should aim at securing effective protection for all workers irrespective of sex. The resolution also urged that the principle of equal pay be implemented by an equal pay convention. Although part of the resolution was contrary to our policy yet it contained much that was good. Lobbying was carried on to have the offending part deleted. In the Resolutions Committee, however, the authors of the resolutions were asked to combine them into one joint resolution. This final joint resolution was not at all satisfactory as it omitted those parts of the original Jouhaux resolution that we had deemed most hopeful. The campaign was then directed to securing an amendment to the resolution urging the incorporation in the I. L. O. constitution of the two equality provisions that we had asked for on the deputation. Support, however, was not obtained for our amendment, although much good work was done in lobbying.

M. Jouhaux in moving the resolution in the plenary session of the Conference said that although in order to meet the wishes of the Resolutions Committee he had reluctantly agreed to combine his resolution with that of Mr. Kupers he did not consider that the present resolution went far enough—it was thirty years behind the times. He called for consideration by the I. L. O. of the whole problem of the status of women in industry and not merely of equality of pay.

Dr. Dora Schmidt, Government Adviser, Switzerland, said that one of the reasons why women's work was less well paid than men's was because their work is subject to legal restrictions. She commented on the fact that there was no woman member of the Governing Body of the I. L. O. and expressed the hope that the Governing Body would hear the opinions of women before taking decisions on their behalf.

Meanwhile the question of Technical and Vocational Education, which was on the agenda of the Conference for second discussion with a view to the adoption of a Draft Recommendation, was referred to a committee. The proposed text of the Draft Recommendation contained a proviso to the clause which opened all tech-

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Women's Independence Day Celebrated

THE National Woman's Party at its headquarters on Capitol Hill celebrated on the evening of July 19 the ninety-first anniversary of the first Woman's Rights Convention, held in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848, when a determined group of women, indignant at the chains of law and custom holding them in an inferior position, gave notice to the world that women demanded complete equality.

The Declaration of Sentiments adopted at this meeting and now known as the Declaration of Independence of American Women, was read at the meeting by Mrs. Hazel Nyman. Led by Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, the pioneers for equality demanded equal rights in the franchise, in education, industry, the professions, in political office, in marriage, in personal freedom, in control of property, the making of contracts and in guardianship of children.

Mrs. Harvey W. Wiley, a Vice-Chairman of the Party, told the story of the Seneca Falls Convention and recounted the history of the Woman's Rights Movement which had its beginning in that gathering. She pointed to the winning of suffrage as the first victory resulting from Seneca Falls. The proposed Equal Rights Amendment, now before Congress, she declared to be the next step, destined to free women from the bonds of unequal laws. "The Equal Rights Amendment," Mrs. Wiley said, "will complete the work so valiantly inaugurated ninety-one years ago."

Helen McGerr, who presided, explained the meaning of the first organized effort of women to win political, civil, economic and social emancipation of women, climaxing her remarks with the declaration that women must now secure for themselves the same guarantees of liberty and inalienable human rights already guaranteed men in the Constitution of the United States.

Dorothy Moncure, of Virginia, spoke on the objectives and methods of the National Woman's Party which is continuing the campaign for the objectives of the first Woman's Rights Convention.

A poem entitled "The Pioneers" written by Edna St. Vincent Millay, a Founder of the Party, was read by Maud Howell Smith.

Focusing the attention of the audience on the current trends of the movement, Mrs. Dorothy Sanford Wilson, of Portland Oregon, President of the League of Professional Women, Inc., outlined the growth of the campaign of women for a full share in Democracy, closing with, "We want everyone, man or woman, married or single, to have the same break." Mrs. Wilson brought to the Woman's Party from her organization, greetings and a pledge of support for the nation-wide campaign for the Equal Rights Amendment.

Louise Pote, District Branch Chairman, stated the position of the Amendment in Congress and called for volunteers for deputations to go the following day to members of the House and Senate Judiciary Committees to urge an immediate favorable report on the measure. The response resulted in several deputations, comprising women from many sections of the country, waiting on committee members in their offices the following morning. The following resolution, calling upon the Federal and State Governments to designate July 19 of each year WOMEN'S INDEPENDENCE DAY and a LEGAL HOLIDAY were offered by Mrs. Burnita Matthews and adopted:

FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS CALLED
UPON TO DESIGNATE JULY 19TH
LEGAL HOLIDAY

WHEREAS, a century ago women occupied an inferior legal status, being accorded almost no rights which men were bound to

respect; and

WHEREAS, the injuries and indignities heaped upon women led to a convention on July 19, 1848, at Seneca Falls, New York, adopting a Declaration of Independence for women; and

WHEREAS, this declaration demanded the right to vote, equal rights in education, in industry, in the professions, in political office, in marriage, in personal freedom, in the control of property, in the guardianship of children, in making contracts, and the participation with men in public affairs; and

WHEREAS, the women of this country are carrying forward the 1848 program for the complete emancipation of women and have caused the right of women to vote to be written into the Constitution of the United States;

Now, Therefore, Be It

RESOLVED by the National Woman's Party that the 19th day of July in each year, being the anniversary of the Seneca Falls Declaration of 1848, be known as Women's Independent Day. Be it further

RESOLVED that the National Woman's Party call upon the Federal and State Governments to designate July 19th in each year as WOMEN'S INDEPENDENCE DAY and a LEGAL HOLIDAY. Be it further

RESOLVED that other organizations be called upon to assist in effecting the purpose of the resolution.

The meeting closed with the reading by Helen Hunt West, Editor of Equal Rights, of another poem by an unknown author, given to Carrie Harrison forty years ago by a member of the Wellesley College Faculty and dedicated to the Equal Rights Pioneers.

Throughout the nation similar meetings were held on July 19 in celebration of Women's Independence Day, with an idea of establishing the custom of commemorating the birth of the movement for the complete emancipation of women. It was appropriate that one of these meetings was held in Independence Hall in Philadelphia, where the Declaration of Independence was signed. The story of the first Women's Rights Convention and the adoption of Women's Declaration of Independence was given to the nation through a series of radio addresses as well as newspaper stories.

Filling the garden of Alva Belmont House for the meeting was a group of women representing many organizations devoted to the principles for which the women attending the first Equal Rights Convention stood. The spirit of consecration to the cause of women which actuated the pioneers of 1848 was so apparent in the group celebrating the anniversary of the event, that one needed not to be told that there are still pioneers in the Woman Movement, nearly a century after its birth.

HOTEL ROOSEVELT

Madison Ave. and 45th St.

NEW YORK CITY

A Feminist Thinks It Over

By ALMA LUTZ

PEARL BUCK'S CHALLENGE TO WOMEN

I DO NOT know when I have read a better appeal to women or a better challenge to women than Pearl Buck's article in Harper's Magazine for July, "America's Gunpowder Women."

Mrs. Buck divides women into three classes: women of talent who go ahead and do things, the born housekeepers who make a job of their housework and their children and are completely happy in it, and Gunpowder Women. The first two cause her no concern. They are useful and contented. But Gunpowder Women, who constitute the majority, are a waste and a danger. Well educated, free, not held down by poverty, and often secretly hoping to do something useful, they are so privileged that they can do nothing and nothing is expected of them. Privilege incapacitates them. They fritter away their time to keep busy, and because they are basically intelligent, they cannot be satisfied with lives so vacant. Yet they have neither the energy nor the gumption to pull themselves out of this slough of mental inertia into real usefulness. In other words, they are fed and clothed for trying to amuse themselves.

And why does this condition exist? Mrs. Buck says because women "have been denied the one great blessing of a man's life—the necessity to go out into the world and earn their bread directly."

"Men and women," she says, "are born free and equal in ability and brain." But man is taught that he must develop himself and work while "woman is taught merely to develop such things that please the man, lest she starve because he does not want to feed her." There is no escape for the man. He must work. There is no refuge for him in the home. Women find refuge in the home, and while many work hard there, many more make it the excuse for a leisurely, unprofitable life. "A man is educated and turned out to work," says Mrs. Buck. "But a woman is educated—and turned out to grass."

Considering this handicap of privilege, Mrs. Buck does not blame women. She knows that men would not have accomplished what they have in all fields if they had not had the compulsory discipline of work.

What can be done about it? What can tap that latent power and usefulness in these Gunpowder Women? Nothing, says Mrs. Buck, unless women want to do something, and she wonders if it is not too much to ask for women "without any help or encouragement and often with active discouragement and ridicule" to push aside privilege and take their place in the world's work as ordinary human beings. She is inclined to think that the only thing that will rouse women is to be so discriminated against by law that they will revolt and demand their rights as human beings. In doing this they would realize at last that they had to be human beings as well as women in order to keep their freedom.

She believes that never before "since the pioneering fight for woman's rights was won," has women's interest in work and a profession been as low as it is now. It seems as if women, frightened by the depression, are retreating into the so-called safety of femininity "into the easy old way of living to please one man and persuading him to do the work for two."

Then, she asks, "What can women do in the United

States, women who do not have to do anything. They can beautify and clean up the cities and villages, and the countryside, in small ways and large, can improve housing, plan houses and build them, go seriously after government jobs, investigate and change obsolete education and text books, go into politics, business, and the professions in greater numbers.

"I am convinced," says Mrs. Buck, "there is no way of progress for women except the way men have gone—the way of work or starve, work or be disgraced. . . ."

"Work is the one supreme privilege which too many women in America with all their extraordinary unearned privileges never know. And yet it is the one privilege which will make them free."

Regional Meeting in Atlantic City

Representatives of the National Woman's Party in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia and the Government Workers' Council of the District of Columbia held their annual conference of the Eastern Region including these states the week-end of June 24-25. As usual, the Conference was held at Hotel Claridge, which has as its convention manager Ada Taylor, an active member of the Party. For several years Mrs. Taylor has been in charge of headquarters arrangements.

The Conference was presided over by Dr. Arabel Clark, of Pennsylvania, Chairman. Mrs. May Johnson, of Atlantic City, Chairman of the New Jersey Branch of the Woman's party, delivered the address of welcome, which was followed by reports of state chairmen and the Government Workers' Council.

A buffet luncheon was served in the Binnocle Room, the afternoon session being devoted to round table discussions dealing with the Equal Rights Amendment and the best means of securing its speedy passage; organization and jury service.

A highlight of the Conference was the Saturday night banquet at which Dr. Clark presided. Margaret Talbot Stevens, assistant editor of the Baltimore & Ohio Railway magazine, spoke interestingly on Equality and Opportunity for Railroad Women. Dr. Mildred Hicks Brunn, Chemist for the Sun Oil Company, and Captain R. N. Snooks, of the New Jersey State Police, were other headliners. Following the report of the resolutions committee the morning of the second day, the election was held, resulting as follows: Alma Ambrose, Baltimore, Md., Chairman; Mrs. Annette Jurgens, Baltimore, Md., secretary; Elsie Graff, Richmond, Va., treasurer.

The Right of Working Women to Marry was the theme of the Sunday luncheon meeting, at the close of which Dr. Clark, Regional Chairman for six years, and other retiring officers, Mrs. Laura Anderson, Secretary; Mrs. Mary Grove, of Philadelphia, Treasurer, were paid a tribute by the Conference and were presented with gifts as tokens of appreciation of their work.

Edith Ruppertsberger, president of the Equal Rights Council of Goucher College, and Barbara C. McGlynn, of Wilkesbarre, Pa., president of the Pennsylvania Organization of Teachers, were speakers at the luncheon, the final event of the two-day meet. The next meeting will be held in January in Washington, D. C.

This was the twelfth Conference held by this Region, which reports an enthusiastic attendance and the formulating of plans for an intensive campaign for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment.

You Can't Do This To Women

(Continued from page 100)

that they wanted divorce—it occurred in those cases where the combined salaries of man and wife made it possible for them to meet their joint obligations. When the wife was driven from her job and there was but one salary—divorce, through mutual agreement, followed. Likewise many pending marriages never materialized because the parties realized that if only one could be employed the situation was futile.

That the Congress of the United States once tried this dangerous experiment through the ill-starred Section 213 of the "Economy Act," ought to be a lesson to those who would attempt to perpetuate such an absurd and discriminatory policy against one-half of the population of free America.

But Section 213 was repealed, because women marshalled their forces and taught the country a lesson in political science.

That this sort of mental aberration could gain support from any one—except Morons—seems incredible. That it could even be proposed in the American democracy is still more incredible.

There is one thing the male ought to get through his thick skull and that is that the female is his equal in intelligence, his superior in many other attributes, and can no longer be brushed aside as a minor, held in bondage or legislated out of her inheritance as a human being that his vanity and economic security, without competition, might be protected.

Selfishness, born of fear of competition from women in business and industry, is one of a number of sinister motives behind this movement. Its sponsors are not so chivalrous that they want to put the woman back in the home that she might be sheltered from the rudeness and cruelties of a cold and sordid world. That is not the idea at all. The plan offers a lucrative return on the one hand and on the other it would protect all the jobs for men—married or single. Men want all the jobs at their disposal without competition.

Well, there is one natural law, which cannot be abrogated by man-made legislation or discrimination, and that law is the survival of the fittest. If man cannot meet the competition of women—then it is time to put the *men* back in the home and let the women work.

Probably we have been more vehement than is justified by this insult to one's intelligence. The Massachusetts Supreme Court already has ruled—you can't do this to women. And we think the United States Supreme Court would concur.

In a recent opinion involving discriminatory legislation against married women in Massachusetts the court declared such legislation to be unconstitutional. Said the court, "Married women are not by reason of being women, or being married excluded from citizenship. * * * Women, married or unmarried, are members of the state. Subject only to constitutional limitations, they share with other citizens the duties and privileges of citizenship and like other citizens they are entitled to the benefits of the constitutional guarantees against arbitrary discriminations." And on the basis of the court's ruling the Massachusetts legislature repealed the act.

So, we think the Wage-Security Plan Organization, and all other similar movements designed to practice unconstitutional discrimination against married women, or any other group of American citizens, had better close up shop and call it a day. If not, we repeat—here is work for the Dies Committee on un-American Activities, and possibly prosecution in the courts.

International Labor Conference

(Continued from page 101)

nical schools for boys and girls on equal terms, excluding girls from performing work which they are forbidden by law from performing on grounds of health. The World Woman's Party and the Equal Rights International circularised all members of the committee in English, French and German and interviewed a number of them asking for the deletion of this proviso from the Clause. The representative of the British Government proposed the deletion. It was, however, opposed by the workers' bloc and to bridge the gulf Madame Atanatskovitch representing the Yugoslav Government, proposed the substitution of the words: "Provided that women and girls are not required to engage continuously on work which on grounds of health they are legally prohibited from performing, a short period on such work for the purpose of training, being, however, permissible." This was passed. Lobbying then continued with a view to obtaining through the drafting committee the substitution of "young persons" for "women and girls" in the proviso. Support was not forthcoming and the Draft Recommendation was passed.

The last move in our campaign was to obtain the signatures of delegates to a proposed letter to the President of the Conference asking that the question of incorporating in the I. L. O. constitution the two equality provisions already alluded to, be brought before the Governing Body for consideration at its next meeting. Although this was attempted when the Conference was nearing its close, as a result of intense lobbying, eleven signatures were obtained and the letter was presented to the President for transmission to the Chairman of the Governing Body.

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